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Barnstaple Rural District

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Annual Report

— ON —

The Health of the Area

VITAL STATISTICS

SANITARY WORKS

ETC.

for the Year 1956

BARNSTAPLE RURAL DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT
ON
THE HEALTH OF THE AREA
VITAL STATISTICS
SANITARY WORKS
ETC.
for the Year 1956

By

Dr. F. J. H. MARTIN


(M.R.C.S. Eng., L.R.C.P. Lond., D.P.H. Oxon.)

Medical Officer of Health

And

ARTHUR J. DENNIS

Chief Public Health Inspector



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The Health Department,

The Red House,

Castle Street,

Barnstaple,

1957.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Barnstaple Rural District Council.

Mrs. Trebble and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you the Report upon the
Public Health of the Barnstaple Rural District
for the year 1956.

Your obedient Servant,

FRANK MARTIN,

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Part Time Officer :

Medical Officer of Health · Dr. F. J. H. Martin, M.R.C.S. Eng.,
L.R.C.P. Lond., D.P.H. Oxon.

Whole Time Officers :

Chief Public Health Inspector } A. J. Dennis, M.A.P.H.I.,
Building Surveyor and Engineer } C.R.S.H.

Additional Public Health Inspector : F. A. Lethbridge,
M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.

Second Public Health Inspector : T. F. Bennett, M.A.P.H.I.,
A.R.S.H.

Housing Manager – – – C. D. Squire, A.I.A.S.

Articled Pupils : N. J. Dennis
N. Venner

Clerks } Mrs. J. Kelly
Miss S. Stacey

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The chief occupations of the district are :—

1. Agriculture
2. Catering for Visitors
3. Market Gardening.

The locality may be regarded as purely non-industrial,
and employment is on the whole steady.

1956

ANNUAL REPORT

Of the Medical Officer of Health
for the Barnstaple Rural District

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area in Acres	.. .. .	129,346
Population (Registrar-General's Mid-Year Estimate)		24,070
Inhabited Houses	.. .. .	7,282
Rateable Value	.. .. .	£233,023
Value of a Penny Rate	.. .. .	£916 5s. 8d. (Est.)

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	175	157	332
Illegitimate ..	7	4	11
			<hr/> 343

Birth Rate per 1,000 Population 14.25

Still Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate ..	2	4	6
Illegitimate ..	1	0	1
			<hr/> 7

Rate per 1,000 Live and Still Births 20.00

Deaths	Male	Female	Total
	158	144	302

Death Rate per 1,000 Population 12.54

The Table below shows the comparative figures for Barnstaple Rural District and England and Wales.

Birth Rate per 1,000 Population			Death Rate per 1,000	Infant Mortality per 1,000 Live Births	
	Live Births	Still Births		Deaths under 1 year	Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years
Barnstaple Rural Dist.	16.38	.29	10.90	11.66	0
England and Wales	15.7	0	11.7	23.8	0

The local Birth and Death Rates are shown above corrected by the area comparability factor.

Deaths of Infants under 1 Year

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	..	..	2	2	4
Illegitimate	..	..	0	0	0
					—
					4

Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks of age

			Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	..	..	1	2	3
Illegitimate	..	..	0	0	0
					—
					3

Local Deaths over 65 years

65 — 69 .. 20	85 — 89 .. 27
70 — 74 .. 51	90 — 94 .. 10
75 — 79 .. 61	95 plus .. 4
80 — 84 .. 54	
	<i>Total</i> ..227

Deaths from Measles (all ages) ..	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	..	..	..	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea under 2 years ..	..	..	..	0

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1956

						Males	Females
Malignant Neoplasm of Stomach	..	..				2	4
Malignant Neoplasm of Lung Bronchus	..					7	0
Malignant Neoplasm of Breast	..	..				0	6
Malignant Neoplasm of Uterus	..	..				0	2
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms						16	18
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	..	..	..			1	1
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	..					14	17
Diabetes	..	..	..	..	..	1	0
Coronary Disease—Angina	..	..	..			24	16
Other Heart Diseases	..	..	..			45	46
Hypertension with Heart Disease	..	..				3	3
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	..					1	2
Other Circulatory Diseases	..	..	..			4	9
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	3	1
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	..	6	2
Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	0	9
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenal	..	..				3	2
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	..	..				0	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	..	..	..			0	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate	..	..	..			5	1
Congenital Malformations, etc.	..	..				0	1
Other Defined and Ill Defined Diseases	..					10	8
Motor Vehicle Accidents	..	..	..			6	0
All Other Accidents	..	..	..	..		6	2
Suicide	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
						<hr/>	<hr/>
All Causes	..	..				158	144
Total	..	..					302

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

Tuberculosis

Hawley Sanatorium, situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds.

Maternity Cases

At the North Devon Infirmary there is a ward of 14 beds with a fully qualified staff available for cases of doubt or difficulty.

At Bicklecombe Hospital, Ilfracombe, there are 10 beds for Maternity and Ante-natal patients.

There are 4 beds at Braunton Nursing Home.

A General Practitioner Maternity Unit of 13 beds is situated at Highfield, Victoria Road, Barnstaple.

Isolation of Infectious Diseases

There is an Infectious Diseases Isolation Hospital at Bideford, The Kingsley Hospital, which serves Barnstaple as well as other Local Authorities in North Devon.

Small Pox

The Small Pox Hospital to which any cases of Small Pox will be sent is Upton Pine Hospital, near Exeter. Special Ambulance Transport can be obtained by contacting the Isolation Hospital, Whipton, Exeter. Telephone 67158.

General

The North Devon Infirmary, situated in Barnstaple, serves the Area, and provides modern Medical and Surgical treatment for the residents of the district.

Wards at the Alexandra Hospital are set aside as an annexe to the wards of the North Devon Infirmary, and post-operative and recovery patients are now transferred there as soon as practicable.

There are 101 beds for the chronic sick at the Alexandra Hospital.

At Braunton Nursing Home there are 4 beds for sick persons.

Laboratory Facilities

The Main Laboratory is situated at 7, Dix's Field, Exeter, and Dr. Moore is the Director. It is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological examinations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients. Bacteriological examinations of drinking water and milk are also carried out.

There is also a Pathological Laboratory at 75, Boutport Street, Barnstaple, with a full-time Pathologist and Technical Staff to meet the needs of the whole North Devon Area. The Blood Bank is also situated at this Laboratory.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

V.D. Clinic

This is held at the North Devon Infirmary Annexe.

Sessions :		Females	Males
Monday	.. ..	4.0 p.m.	5.15 p.m.
Thursday	.. ..	4.30 p.m.	5.45 p.m.

Chest Clinic

The Chest Clinic is held at the North Devon Infirmary, Glossop Annexe.

Sessions :

Tuesdays	9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	}	Clinic and X-Ray Examinations
Thursdays	9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.		
Fridays	9 a.m. to 1 p.m. 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	}	A.P. Refills

Ambulance Service

Under section 27 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, the Local Health Authority (i.e. the Devon County Council) is responsible for the provision of an Ambulance Service, and the Devon Health Committee have arranged for this to be provided through the agency of the St. John Ambulance Association. The Brigade serves Barnstaple Borough and the District around, and the Headquarters are in Commercial Road, Barnstaple. The staff consists of 3 paid members (full time), 20 men volunteers, and 14 volunteer nurses. The Hospital car service, also under the

Devon County Council, is available upon application to the Hospital by the Doctor concerned, and the Ambulance Service is empowered to hire cars in urgent cases when the Ambulance is not necessary.

Immunization against Diphtheria

During the year 296 children received primary injections ; 336 children received reinforcing injections.

Vaccination

During the year the following vaccinations were carried out :

Under 1 year	1-2 years	2-4 years	5-14 years	15 years and over
79	96	22	17	67

Professional Nursing in the Homes

There are 8 District Nurses in the area, all of whom act as Midwives.

Home Helps Scheme

This scheme was started in March 1949 and is run by the W.V.S. for the Devon County Council. It covers Barnstaple Borough and the Rural Areas wherever transport is available and the scheme is directed by Mrs. Marjorie Hughes. There are now 54 Home Helps and 393 cases were dealt with in 1956 as compared with 52 Home Helps and 389 cases in 1955. Any case recommended by a Doctor, Health Visitor or District Nurse is considered for a Home Help. The Home Helps do any work in the house normally done by the housewife. Home Helps are now looking after 103 aged people, who are living by themselves and who would otherwise have to go into hospital. During the year 1956, 20 maternity cases have been rendered assistance in their homes by the Home Helps and 12 blind people also received assistance from the Service.

Prevalence of Infectious Diseases

The following Tables give particulars of the Infectious Diseases notified during the year, together with the distribution of cases and the age groups.

<i>Names of Diseases</i>					<i>No. Notified</i>
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	2
Measles	..	..	..	..	459
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	10
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	25
Food Poisoning	..	..	..	..	29
					<hr/>
					525

Tuberculosis—New Cases

During the year 9 fresh cases of Tuberculosis were notified in accordance with the regulations.

<i>Age Periods</i>		<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
		M.	F.	M.	F.
1 to 5 years	..	0	0	0	0
5 to 10 years	..	0	0	0	0
10 to 15 years	..	0	0	0	1
15 to 25 years	..	1	0	0	0
25 to 35 years	..	0	1	0	0
35 to 45 years	..	0	0	0	1
45 to 55 years	..	1	0	0	0
55 to 65 years	..	3	1	0	0
65 and over	..	0	0	0	0
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Totals	..	5	2	0	2

Tuberculosis—Distribution of Cases

Atherington	..	..	..	..	2
Berrynarbor	..	..	..	..	1
Bishops Tawton	..	..	..	..	1
Braunton	..	..	..	..	3
Combe Martin	..	..	..	..	1
Goodleigh	..	..	..	..	1
					—
					9

Infectious Diseases—Age Periods.

	<i>Under</i> 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	15-24	25 and over	<i>Age</i> <i>unknown</i>	<i>Total</i>
Measles	8	81	81	254	23	5	7	—	459
Whooping Cough	—	6	3	13	2	1	—	—	25
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	2	7	1	10
Food Poisoning	—	—	—	—	2	27	—	—	29
Totals	8	87	84	267	27	37	14	1	525

Distribution of Infectious Diseases Cases Notified during 1956

Parish	Measles	Whooping Cough	Scarlet Fever	Pneumonia	Food Poisoning	TOTAL
Arlington	1				1	2
Ashford	1					1
Atherington	13	1				14
Berrynarbor	7					7
Bishopstawton	21	9		3		33
Bittadon	5					5
Bratton Fleming	9					9
Braunton	1			1		2
Brendon	11	8				19
Combe Martin....	81					81
Countisbury	3	2				5
East Down	4					4
Fremington	100			1		101
Georgeham	4	1				5
Goodleigh	2					2
Heanton Punchardon....	1		2	1	29	33
High Bray						—
Horwood						—
Instow	11					11
Kentisbury	1					1
Landkey	22	1		2		25
Loxhore	13					13
Martinhoe						—
Marwood	20			1		21
Mortehoe	16			1		19
Newton Tracey	2	2				2
Parracombe	35					35
Pilton West	3					3
Shirwell....	18					18
Stoke Rivers	6					6
Swimbridge	11	1				12
Tawstock	11			1		12
Trentishoe	3					3
West Down	15					15
Westleigh	7					7
Totals	458	25	2	11	30	526

I desire to thank Mr. Marshall Wright and
the Public Health Officers for their help to me.

Your obedient Servant,

F. J. H. MARTIN.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR,
ENGINEER, AND BUILDING SURVEYOR

The Red House,
Castle Street,
Barnstaple.

June, 1957.

To the Chairman and Members of
the Barnstaple Rural District Council.

Mrs. Trebble and Gentlemen,

I beg to present my eleventh Annual Report of work
carried out during 1956.

GENERAL

The area of your district is 129,346 acres with an estimated population of 24,070. As will be seen from my report as Building Surveyor, 80 houses were completed last year by private enterprise. A high proportion of these houses are occupied by persons moving into the area, many on retirement to the district where for many years they have spent their holidays. Consequently the population is steadily increasing.

Regarding the provision of essential services, I can only repeat my remarks of last year in that whilst considerable progress has been made with the provision of water carriage systems, this must for many years be priority No. 1. Through the efforts of the North Devon Water Board, residents in the

rural areas are now enjoying piped water supplies in ever-increasing numbers and, on having a piped supply for the first time, many of them naturally instal modern amenities in the form of flush lavatories, wash basins and sinks. Without an adequate sewerage system, the householders are forced to instal either a septic tank or a cesspool and, in many cases where the land is not entirely suitable for the reception of partially treated drainage effluent, conditions soon arise which are far worse than before the provision of a piped water supply. It is to be regretted that the policy of the Minister is that no sewerage scheme shall be provided until a piped water supply is available. Surely it would be far better if the two services could be provided simultaneously as now in many villages waste water is being discharged into roadside ditches and also finding its way into various water courses, conditions which have been aggravated by the provision of a piped water supply.

It is hoped to commence work on the Instow Sewerage Scheme early in the New Year and before the end of 1957, it is anticipated that work will have commenced on the last portion of the South Bank Scheme and at least one or two of the smaller schemes now outstanding.

The Hele Manor scheme has been completed during the period under review.

The supervision of Caravan Sites during the summer months still claims much of the time of the staff of my Department. The number of caravans coming into the area annually is ever increasing but fortunately the Devon County Planning Authority, working in close co-operation with my Department, is fully aware of the problem and are dealing with it energetically.

As is inevitable in an area with a large sea-board, your district is crowded with visitors during the summer months. It is unfortunate, however, that the people who enjoy the amenities of this sea-board, and they are not all visitors from outside the area, should treat it with such disrespect, leaving behind litter, the collection of which is becoming a major problem. With the steady increase in road-borne visitors, the roadsides quickly become littered with waste paper, tins and bottles and in an attempt to keep the area as tidy as possible, the resources of the Cleansing Department are taxed to the utmost. Every endeavour is made to encourage visitors to place their litter in the many receptacles provided throughout your district, but education on a national basis, particularly in the schools, appears to be the only answer to awaken a sense of responsibility in visitors to the sea and countryside.

During the year under review, a much improved refuse collection system has been inaugurated. As from the 1st April last, every part of your district receives a refuse collection service not less frequently than once a fortnight, built-up areas receiving a weekly collection and the larger villages along the sea-board receiving a bi-weekly collection during the summer months.

Private slaughtering is continuing in the area and, generally speaking, the meat traders have afforded the fullest co-operation.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

The total number of Inspections, Re-visits and Interviews during the year was 3,347. Made up as follows :—

Visits re Infectious Diseases	..	..	..	10
Water Supplies	..	..	..	45
Number of Drains Inspected and Tested	..	..		405
Sewers	..	..	..	408
Sewage Disposal Works	..	..	..	6
Housing Repairs	..	..	..	33
National Assistance Act	..	..	..	—
Housing Act Inspections	..	..	..	15
Coast Protection	..	..	..	6
Building Byelaws	..	..	..	246
Town and Country Planning Act	..	..	..	280
Inspection of Slaughter Houses	..	..	..	2
Inspection of Food Premises	..	..	..	108
Meat and Foods Inspection	..	..	..	731
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	..	10
Milk Retailers	..	..	..	7
Public Cleansing	..	..	..	307
Inspections under the Petroleum Acts	..	..		80
Public Health Act Inspections, Nuisances, etc.	..			250
Bakehouses	..	..	..	—
Rodent Control	..	..	..	1
Factories, Workshops, etc.	..	..	..	18
Public Conveniences	..	..	..	112
Tents, Vans, Sheds and Camping Sites	..	..		117
Visits to Refuse Tips	..	..	..	30
Schools	..	..	..	—
Number of Council and Committee Meetings attended	..	..	..	120

SUMMARY OF MEAT INSPECTIONS

<i>Animals</i>	<i>Inspected</i>	<i>Condemned Carcases</i>	<i>Condemned Portions</i>	
			<i>T.B.</i>	<i>Other Causes</i>
Sheep ..	6,361	26		98 Livers
Pigs ..	2,227	1	36 Heads	7 Plucks
Bullocks	394	2	9 Heads & Lungs	732 lbs.
Calves ..	138	2		

Disposal of Carcases deposited on Foreshore.

Animal carcases are still being deposited around the foreshore from time to time. Arrangements have to be made for disposal, usually by burial in lime on the foreshore.

Total Notices (Served as under).

Public Health Act, 1936	..	..	..	5
Housing Acts	..	..	..	16

Swimming Pools

The only Swimming Pool in the district is situated on the seashore and is privately owned. The pool is covered by every tide.

Offensive Trades

Byelaws are in operation for the control of Offensive Trades. There is one in the District : the Tannery at Swimbridge.

Underground Sleeping Rooms

There is no need for Regulations in this area in respect of underground sleeping rooms.

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

Byelaws are in force relating to the above.

Food & Drugs Act, 1955

Food Hygiene Regulations. 108 inspections of registered food premises were made during the year and regular attention was paid to hotel kitchens. Generally the standard of cleanliness in hotel kitchens was found to be satisfactory but where the standard was otherwise, informal action was sufficient to obtain the necessary improvement.

Smoking by persons preparing food was found to be fairly common and before this practice was stopped in some cases, legal action had to be threatened.

As many of the premises in your area cater for summer visitors this aspect of public health work will receive special attention during the coming year.

89 premises are registered for the sale of Ice-cream. 18 premises are registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949/1954, 14 of which are dairies, the remaining 4 being registered for the sale of cream.

Inspection and Supervision of Food

Regular visits have been made to food shops, in addition to slaughterhouses, and where necessary certain items of tinned food have been condemned, in some cases due to rust and leakage following damage to tins during transport and through length of time in stock, and in others for putrefaction of the contents.

The method of disposal of condemned tinned foods was by burial or burning in the Barnstaple Borough Council's incinerator.

Fresh meat condemned in the slaughterhouses was disposed of to a local Zoo, where suitable, or again by burning in the Borough Council's incinerator.

Water

10 Water Samples were taken, 7 of which proved satisfactory. Advice was given in the case of the unsatisfactory results in an endeavour to effect improvements.

Farm Water Supplies

Several Farm Water Supplies were investigated at the request of the Agricultural Executive Committee during the year.

Coast Protection

Regular inspections are made of the banks and defences generally around your coast. Two cases requiring attention have been notified to the responsible owners who have carried out the necessary work.

The owners of the Saunton Burrows have been proceeding apace with the planting of Marram Grass and already the good work being carried out is evident by the formation of sand dunes in the areas already planted. I am happy to be able to say that the erosion appears to have been halted and the continued planting of Marram Grass should ultimately lead to the reforming of the complete foredune system.

Factories Act, 1937 (Sections 110 & 111)

OUTWORKERS

Nature of Work (1)	Section 110				Section 111	
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c) (2)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (3)	No. of Prosecutions for failing to supply lists (4)	No. of instances of work in un-wholesome premises (5)	Notices served	Prosecutions
Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.)	20	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ..	20	—	—	—	—	—

FACTORIES ACT, 1937—PART I OF THE ACT

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provision as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspector).

<i>Premises</i> (1)	<i>Number on Register</i> (2)	<i>Number of</i>		
		<i>Inspections</i> (3)	<i>Written Notices</i> (4)	<i>Occupiers Prosecuted</i> (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	16	3	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	56	13	Nil	Nil
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	6	2	Nil	Nil
Total	78	18	Nil	Nil

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

<i>Particulars</i> (1)	<i>Number of cases in which defects were found</i>			<i>Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted</i> (6)
	<i>Found</i> (2)	<i>Remedied</i> (3)	<i>Referred To H.M. By H.M. Inspector</i> (4) (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)				
Overcrowding (S.2)				
Unreasonable temperature (S.3) ..				
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)				
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ..				
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)				
(a) Insufficient				
(b) Unsuitable or defective				
(c) Not separate for sexes				
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)				
Total	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

BUILDING SURVEYOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

The Red House,
Castle Street,
Barnstaple.

June, 1957.

To the Chairman and Members of
The Barnstaple Rural District Council.

Mrs. Trebble and Gentlemen,

I beg to present the following Report on the activities of
the Building Surveyor's Department during the year 1956.

PLANS

Details of Plans Submitted

No. approved under Bye-laws	..	..	67
No. disapproved under Byelaws	..	..	3
No. approved under Town Planning	..	..	266
No. disapproved under Town Planning	..	..	39
No decision given under Town Planning	..	..	2
No. withdrawn after formal submission	..	..	9
No. of houses completed during the year :—			
(1) By Private Enterprise	..	..	80
(2) By Local Authority	..	..	40

I wish to record my thanks to each member of the
Council, the Clerk, Medical Officer of Health, and to all
members of the Department for their support and con-
sideration during the past year.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

ARTHUR J. DENNIS.

